

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 27, 29-36 and 38-52 were pending in the above-captioned application when the present Office Action was mailed (November 15, 2005). In this response, claims 1 and 8 have been amended, and claims 5 and 44 have been cancelled without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation or other application. Accordingly, claims 1-3, 6-10, 27, 29-36, 38-43 and 45-52 are currently pending.

In the November 15, 2005 Office Action, claims 10, 27, 29-36, 38-42 and 45-52 were allowed. These claims have not been amended in this paper. Claims 1, 2, 6-9 and 43 were rejected, and claims 3, 5 and 44 were objected to but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to be in independent form. Without commenting on or conceding the merits of the Examiner's claim rejections, objected-to claim 5 has been incorporated into claim 1, from which it depends, and objected-to claim 44 has been incorporated into claim 8, from which it depends. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1 and 8 should be withdrawn. Claims 2, 6, 7 and 9 depend from claim 1, and claim 43 depends from claim 8. Accordingly, the rejections of these claims should be withdrawn for the foregoing reasons and for the additional features of these dependent claims. Claim 3 depends from claim 1. Accordingly, the objection to claim 3 should also be withdrawn for the foregoing reasons and for the additional features of this dependent claim.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0665, under Order No. 291958117US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the cited art. The applicant accordingly requests reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at (206) 359-3257.

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Respectfully submitted,

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